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ABSTRACT

This three-part pamphlet presents 52 ideas contributed by 19 administrators at California community colleges for boosting the morale and performance of college administrators and staff. Following a list of contributors, the first part provides 39 suggestions for acknowledging contributions and encouraging staff members, including writing short notes expressing thanks, using employee ideas for meeting agendas, knowing the names of employees, giving small gifts, organizing a free lunch or potluck, and selecting employees of the month. The second part provides three methods for praising employees, including giving out personalized notes from administrators to express acknowledgment and thanks and presenting thank you certificates and awards of excellence from the college. The third part describes 10 case studies of techniques used by community colleges in California to improve employee morale and performance, including the following: (1) the use of annual retreats and a full staff meeting every 2 months at Los Angeles City College to develop shared goals and specific policies; (2) the use of personality, learning, and other assessment instruments at Ventura College to facilitate communication and self-esteem among staff; and (3) a colloquium of 57 staff, faculty, and administrators organized by Cypress College to develop new ideas and strategies. (TGI)

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Sure Fire Ideas for Boosting Morale and Creating a Can-Do Culture

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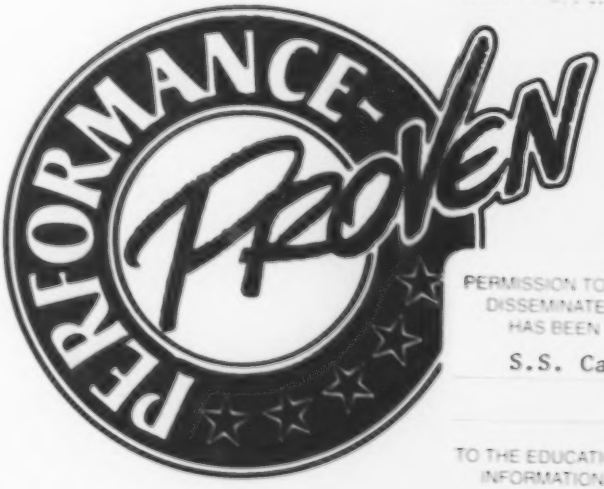

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Section I - Celebrations and Everyday Miracles

Submitted by Dr. John Baker, VP, Student Services, San Diego Mesa College.

1. Praise must be given immediately. Tell people what they did right.....tell people how good it made you feel and how it helps the college....and encourage them to do more of the same.
2. Carry your business card with you and simply write a short note on the back of it and leave it on the desk of the person expressing your thanks for a job well-done.
3. When you see a contribution by a colleague, call them into your office and speak of that -- and only that -- contribution.
4. To get another view volunteer to work in another work area with someone. You might even take their position for a while and give them a break for coffee.
5. Give credit to others and make sure they know that you know that it was their idea that got the needed results. Leaders give others credit and take responsibility when things break down.
6. Never use anger with those with whom you work. You can feel angry...but don't display it.
7. Urge employees to give you bad news...the earlier the better. That allows you to work with them to correct the situation.
8. When you run a meeting, live within the set time..even if you have not completed all the work.
9. Allow the agenda for meetings to be built by all players.
10. Get the agenda out to folks 24 hours before meeting so all will know what is ahead.

11. People love hearing their name. Know the names of the people with whom you work and use their names as you work with them.
12. Drop a note to the significant other or relatives of employees letting them know about the important con tributions of their family member.
13. There are two things people want more than sex and money...recognition and praise!
14. Don't forget, we work through people...not around, under, over or between them.
15. In colleges many classified are working near poverty levels. Recognition and praise and the celebration of their work is essential.
16. For many staff, the college is their home base. Their neighborhood. When they leave the campus, they often return to neighborhoods that are poor. Their life giving arena where they share their artwork is the college.
17. Sundae Mondays: deliver ice cream sundaes to staff to celebrate them and their artwork.
18. "Caught you caring" envelopes that are handed out by an administrator as she/he makes rounds and sees someone caring for another.
19. Dean's Study Star is a free drink certificate that is given out by administrators to students during finals week and at other times when the student is found studying in the library.
20. Apple gift: when you hear from a student or someone about the help received from a staff member, write them a note of appreciation and wrap the note around an apple and send through college mail.
21. When you are running a meeting, hide a lotto ticket or two under two chairs. At the end of the meeting tell folks that while each is a star, one may be much richer. Check under chairs.

22. Hide a Lotto ticket in a desk and let folks know that there is a secret gift hidden in someone's desk. Pure fun will result.

Submitted by Dr. Marilyn Brock, Cerritos College

23. Money was saved and moved to pay for any staff to attend one day off campus computer usage classes. Staff got to select which class they wanted to go to. New computers were previously obtained for staff and faculty so the training was a real boost to morale and even the "non users" got into the technology.

Submitted by Dr. Mary Spangler, Los Angeles City College

24 After the Academic Affairs staff completes the stressful opening-of-the-semester activities, we have a special event--e.g., cake, pot luck lunch--to thank the staff for their efforts and acknowledge their hard work.

25. As our gift to the full-time office staff, all the administrators in the Office of Academic Affairs jointly invitethem out to lunch at holiday time. The group is generally about ten to twelve strong. In addition to formally acknowledging our appreciation, we believe that it relieves the pressure of their having to worry about who should get/receive gifts and how much should be spent.

Submitted by College of the Sequoias

26 We have an "Employee of the Month" program. People are nominated through a suggestion box. Employees receiving this honor have included faculty, classified staff (gardeners, carpenters, secretaries, etc.) and administrators. The honoree is recognized at a Board of Trustee's meeting, receives a nice plaque, has a special designated parking spot for the month, and has their picture and a nice article about their accomplishments

in a special glass encased bulletin board in a high traffic area. This has been a great way to recognize people for what they do.

Submitted by Dan Walker, Los Rios Community College District

27. We're hosting a satellite tape presentation by Peter Scholtes titled "Motivating Employees"

Submitted by Jim Buysee, Riverside Community College District

28 Don't have secrets. Keep the staff informed. This is different from maintaining confidential matters.

29. Every employee is equally valuable to the team. Each job is important. Treat all employees and jobs the same. This has nothing to do with the skills required to perform each function.

30. Try to spend time with each employee while they are on the job. In other words, spend some time with the employee at their work station talking about things which are not necessarily job related.

31. At least twice each year take the staff out for lunch. This is an expression of appreciation.

Charleen McMahan, Grossmont-Cuyamaca College

32. Systematic, fair, credible implementation of an interest based approach to decision making. (Charleen McMahan, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District)

Susan Cotler, Cuesta College, submitted by Mary Parker

33. She models being a can-do person. At times when I've felt I can't do more, she offers to help, then calls back to follow up. She really hears what is said.

Submitted by Richard Ramirez, Riverside Community College

34. Be positive and be honest. (Richard P. Ramirez, Riverside Community College)

Submitted by Pamela D. Walker, Commission on Athletics

35. A great one day event is a ropes course. This is an event in which everyone participates. Although a little challenging, it is "team focused"

Submitted by Dr. Sharon Caballero, Asst. Supt./VP of Academic Services, Rio Hondo College

36. Praise employees in front of your boss. It makes you all look good, and the employee is especially gratified.
37. Help employees to advance. Mentor those who report to you.
38. One-day and half-day retreats work wonders and promote the creative thinking process.
39. Never, ever be late to meetings you call. People will respect you for showing respect for their time.

Section II - Praiseworthy

Dr.Carter Doran,Asst. Supt./VP, Instruction and Student Services, submitted by college personnel.

40. He has his own pad of personalized mini-notes on which he whips out handwritten notes to everyone: acknowledgements, thank you's, "atta-person's", come see me's, call me's, and how are you's to name a few.

COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President, Instruction and Student Services

Carter Doran

Submitted by Dr. Mary Ann Cox, San Joaquin Delta College

41. It's simple, but the faculty and classified staff have repeatedly commented about how special it is to get the notes of appreciation and thank you's.

Submitted by Jim Buysee, Riverside Community College

42. I issue a Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence. You'd be amazed at the results, and it's worked for me in four different positions in two states.

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

(Date)

To:

From: Jim Buysse, Vice President
Administration and Finance

Subject: **BLUE RIBBON AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**

CONGRATULATIONS!! You've earned the [illegible] and Finance Blue Ribbon Award For Excellence for

, for this special contribution to our College District

Section III - Case Studies

Submitted by Dr. Mary Spangler, Los Angeles City College

43 Once a year in the summer, the Office of Academic Affairs takes a day away from the office to meet at the Vice President's home to develop shared goals and objectives for the year. Before the "annual retreat," the administrators meet to identify broad goals so that staff

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members can focus in on how they can participate in their areas of responsibility. The resulting document is then shared with the department chairpersons to increase accountability and demonstrate our general commitment to service faculty and students. One of the outcomes of as retreat was to delineate job duties more clearly and formally. Another was to focus on how specific office functions--e.g., timely processing of hourly faculty--could be enhanced through computerization.

44. Every two months, the Office of Academic Affairs has a full staff meeting with administrators and staff to review issues and challenges. Everyone is invited to propose ideas. We discuss input before making changes. For example, we did not have a posted office policy but needed one. The administrators drafted a policy, circulated it among staff, reviewed it together at a staff meeting, asked them to make changes and additions (which they did). When it was posted, the policy reflected everyone's ideas and participation.

45. This past semester we had an opportunity to rearrange offices within the Office of Academic Affairs. Rather than making unilateral administrative decisions, we asked the staff for their recommendations about what function should occupy which office. They made suggestions that we incorporated into the new arrange ments.; By providing a model for the staff, administrators encourage team work and team spirit in the Office of Academic Affairs. All four administrators (vice president and deans) willingly and openly share ideas and workload. We maintain a high energy level that demonstrates that we do not expect from staff anymore that we expect from ourselves. They see us interacting regularly, both formally and informally. By modeling a "can-do" attitude among ourselves and

showing them that we trust and respect each other, we communicate those values to them.

Submitted by Dr. Diane Moore, Ventura College

46. A year-long project was developed by myself; Virginia Sommerhauser, a secretary; and Jeff Barsch, a faculty member, to improve the morale of staff at Ventura College. Our goals were to help participants do the following: a)bridge the gaps between management, faculty and classified point of view b) increase their self esteem by understanding and appreciating their unique ways of working in the world. c) increase their under standing and appreciation of others by learning to value the uniqueness of their co-workers and the value of working with others who are diverse in many ways. d) feel less isolated at work. To accomplish these ends, we invited all staff willing to make a commitment for a year to participate in the project; 37 people from all three groups volunteered. We used instruments to assess our personality, learning style, intelligence, brain preference and conflict style. In monthly meetings of the entire group we discussed the theory behind the various assessments, the value of diversity, and how the theory applied to work situations. In monthly meetings of small groups of four which were randomly selected and which continued together throughout the year, we had more intimate discussions and worked together on exercises to apply the theory and the information we had learned about our individual uniqueness to our work situations. In small group exercises we figured out how to work harmoniously with people of different styles, what about our present work fit our styles and what didn't, and how to change our work to better match our styles. By the end of the year 36 of the participants completed the project and

begged to continue with a more advanced program the following year. They reported that they felt happier at work, more connected to the college, and more appreciative of those different from themselves. All volunteered to work in some capacity with a new group of project participants the following year.

Submitted by Dr. Pat Stanley, Cypress College

47. On October 20-21, 1995, with a budget from Staff Development of $10,000, 57 members of the Cypress College Community (representing administration, faculty, and classified staff) attended a colloquium to develop strategies for Strengthening Our College Community. Based on previous success with the Great Teacher's Seminar format, that participatory group process was again chosen for the colloquium. How ever, given the nature of the challenge presented to the participants, it was determined that an outside consultant with expertise in the change process would be a valuable resource. Dr. Eric Olson of Transition Resources International, was selected. As a result, the process was modified to include a keynote address and two sessions of technology-assisted creative thinking and decision making. A facilitation team of seven members of the Cypress College community volunteered to provide leadership for the group process. This colloquium design was particularly effective in exploring individual as well as collective knowledge of change and transition, in examining how our college community might function more effectively, in taking advantage of our creative energies to arrive at new ideas and strategies, and in determining ways to take our ideas back to our colleagues so that we can move forward toward the 21st century as a stronger college community.

(Assignments not included) A second evaluation, mailed out to the participants a week after the colloquium, looked more objectively at the conference facilities, the process, the facilitators, the consultant, and the outcomes. Descriptors of participants' overall reaction included: informative, motivating, unifying, timely, necessary, fulfilling, and hopeful. The process was praised for being effective, well organized, focused, and highly participatory.

Submitted by Dr. Erminda Hicks, San Bernardino Valley College

48. On the third Friday of each month, student services offices are closed for 11/2 hours to allow staff and counseling faculty an opportunity to get together to share. The celebrations are generally held in the morning with breakfast available to all. During the celebrations everyone has the opportunity to talk with each other, to share information about their areas, or to focus on specific topics which celebrate an accomplishment. We also use the time to celebrate birthdays. As an example, the last celebration was dedicated to celebrating one of the counselors and hearing about her adventures while she was on sabbatical leave. Letters from students praising staff are read and staff are recognized for the good work they do. Our December celebration included musical presentations by talented student services personnel, exchanging gifts through our "secret pal" program, and celebrating birthdays. During the Spring semester, a faculty member will share his 2-year Fullbright Exchange experiences in Switzerland. Student service personnel really appreciate the opportunity to get together with everyone else and share work and family

stories, food, as well as getting to know new staff members.

Submitted by Dr. Ruth M. Hemming, Ventura College

49. The most effective "can do"/morale-boosting technique we've found at Ventura College is to pull together as volunteers a group of staff members and students who have a problem to solve or a common goal and turn them loose on it, with an experienced facilitator and back-up clerical assistance.
They are highly-motivated, committed to the task, and believe they are "empowered"--that their results will count. They know they "can do" it, and they feel really good!; This technique has worked in divergent areas on campus, from re-vitalizing the college's Re-entry program and Center to designing a wonderful new Learning Resources Center to addressing a range of computer-related concerns. Staffing and budgeting priorities are addressed in similar (if slightly more structured) fashion. Results to date? A Re-entry Center serving 4-500 students a semester; a 90,000 square foot, $13 million, state-of-the-art Interdisciplinary Learning Center fully-designed and ready to go (all we need is the $13 mil); and the beginnings of a coordinated and prioritized (both for the first time) approach to computing needs on campus. AND, better campus morale, fewer "class" distinctions between employee groups, and an increased belief that the "system" might actually work!

Submitted by Kevin M. Ramirez, Sierra Community College District

50. Speed, guts, and dramatic moves is the motto of our management team as we face the many changes

occurring in our District. In order to relieve some of the stress and fear caused by the challenge of altering the status quo, the team participates in a three-hour retreat the first Friday of each month. The duty of organizing the retreat is assigned on a rotating basis; some of the topics have included staff diversity, customer service, leadership vs. Management, and employee assistance programs. We even used a collaborative process to formulate a major District reorganization at these retreats. The sessions are either facilitated by staff or outside experts; often the "in-house experts" provide the best information. As we learn together, we are also building a stronger management team that has learned to more freely express opinions, share experiences, learn, grow, and laugh at ourselves.

Submitted by Lise S. Telson, Palomar College

51. Honoring Student and Hourly Staff - We select one student hourly or part-time non-contract hourly employee each month who works in one of our Student Support Programs, and honor the individual with a $6.00 certificate for lunch in our cafeteria and framed certificate. The student Support Program Directors nominate any part-time hourly worker they believe is worthy and we make the selection at our bimonthly staff meeting. Any staff person may also nominate an hourly worker or student worker. The recipients are always thrilled to receive the framed certificate and free lunch. Part-time workers often serve our students on the front line and are always expected to be highly professional. This shows are appreciation for their effort. It is inexpensive and brings great satisfaction and improved job morale; Student Services Staff Retreat - Each year the Dean of Student Support

Programs with a committee develops an all day Student Services retreat for all contract and hourly Classified, Faculty, and Administrative staff. We choose a theme and subject matter and develop a low cost, highly interactive and informative day. We have found these days to be informative and very beneficial to staff morale. Staff are put into groups with people from other departments and encouraged to learn more about each other. Each day includes lunch and of course a game or two for fun and relaxation. College staff development funds are used to pay for the day.

Submitted by Mark Edelstein, College of the Redwoods

52. Most faculty engage in activities over the summer which are directly related to their areas of assignment. They attend conferences and workshops, revise curriculum, study or work in their disciplines, review texts, prepare new lectures or supplementary material, and explore new technologies. Their travel is often related to their teaching as well, providing new in sights into their disciplines in addition to broadening their awareness of diverse cultures. Unfortunately, other faculty are sometimes not well-informed about the work their colleagues are doing during the summer, and neither administrators nor trustees have much knowledge of these activities.; A simple and inexpensive way to improve faculty morale is t publicly recognize these activities in a report to the Board of Trustees and the campus community. Information on summer activities can be solicited from faculty members and then compiled into a brief written report, which can be presented at a Board meeting and also mailed to all faculty. This not only helps improve the morale of those who are specifically mentioned in the report, but makes all faculty feel a little more proud of their colleagues, their profession and their institution.

ACCCA Conference
March 15, 1996

Presented by

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